

Groundwater Management Plan Committee

March 15, 2018

12pm – 2pm at Festival Hall Rms 5 & 6

Committee Members in attendance:

Joe Melling	Brent Hunter	Paul Bittmenn	Spencer Jones
Paul Cozzens	Paul Nelson	Rob Dotson	Paul Monroe

Committee Members not in attendance:

Ramon Prestwich	Reed Erickson
-----------------	---------------

Meeting called to order at 12:15pm

Items of Discussion

1. Review Minutes

Paul Bittmenn motioned to approve the minutes as they are written. Second by Joe Melling. Unanimous vote

2. Review the Groundwater Management Plan Draft:

Monroe explained that the most up-to-date draft will always be online through Google Docs. Committee members can update at the same time and the document remains live. The most recent draft was printed and given to each committee member. Monroe asked that the committee members review the plan and make any changes they see needed.

3. Agricultural Incentive Conservation Update:

Monroe said they received \$220,000 in grant money to convert pivots. It works through the Utah Department of Agriculture, ARDL loan program, but not as a loan, rather a grant. More details will be received after meeting with the Director of the Utah Department of Agriculture, LuAnn Adams, next week at the Utah Water Users

Conference. (12:19pm). Another bill that was sponsored by Representative Hawkes was passed. It sets aside \$2.5 million dollars for the State of Utah. It is for agricultural optimization. There is a research side and an incentive side of it. More efficient practices will be looked at for agriculture. The \$220,000 is specifically for Cedar Valley. Bittmenn asked if the 2.5 million will look at other conservation methods. Monroe said he spoke with the representative and they were looking for research specific to each basin. (12:20pm). Monroe gave some examples of other basins and what they have discovered with return flows.

Dotson asked what the \$220,000 can go towards and if it is just for pivots. Monroe said they specifically wanted it for the pivots. \$20,000 will go to Chad Reid of USU Extension to study the results. Dotson said the \$200,000 is for the materials and the installation. He asked if this research can be done with SUU. Monroe said Chad Reid is partnering with SUU to study the pivots.

Melling asked if anyone has talked to Rocky Mountain Power about if they are participating. Nelson said they get a letter each year from Rocky Mountain Power asking them to save their receipts and submit them for rebates. Nelson assumes that they will do that again this year. He suggested asking Brent Hunter. Jones clarified that they just reimburse for materials, not labor. (12:26pm) Jones asked if they could approach Rick Faley who took Tony Bell's place. He said Rick is the head guy. They could also reach out to Tom Heaton. Jones would like to reach out to both of them and see if they can develop a more specific program in the Cedar Valley. Melling asked when the funding will be available by. Monroe will know for sure next week. (12:28pm)

Nelson asked about the specific parts for the pivots and if it will be primarily drag lines. Monroe said the details are not quite ironed out yet.

Discussion on the yield went on for a few minutes. Monroe said the yield is the same, but the power bill drops. Jones said one of the things on the application is probably that the pump has a VFD. They need to be able to turn the pump down so there is that savings. Hunter said VFDs are about \$15,000 and the power company will pay about \$5,000. Jones asked what the average percentage of the ag community use VFDs.

Jones estimated about 35%. Hunter suggested checking with Bert. Hunter agreed that VFDs should be required to slow down the pumping. Jones said they should talk to Jake Benson with ARDL to see about requiring VFDs for farmers converting pivots.

Nelson asked Hunter if less volume of water went through the heads on his pivots lower to the ground. Hunter said it was about the same volume, but they didn't measure for the final cut. Hunter said they are going to try drag lines on his farm this year. He hopes to find out which is the better application for his fields. One pivot is on alfalfa and the other will be on corn. (12:36pm)

Melling said they need to make sure that Rocky Mountain Power is involved and farmers need to be aware that the program is available.

Hunter would like to talk to Tom Baker about the installation and LESA systems. He suggested that farmers may kick their pumps on as soon as April with how the weather has been going.

Hunter suggested a cost share option for the money. He would like to see the grant cover 60-70%. Hunter said the word will have to get the word out.

Monroe asked if a fieldtrip should be set up for April in lieu of a meeting to talk to Tom Baker.

Cozzens asked how many pivots are in Cedar Valley. Monroe said there are about 8,000 acres and it costs around \$10-12,000 per pivot to convert them. Monroe said he likes the bubbler heads better than the drag lines.

Melling asked if Hunter would like to meet with Tom Baker before the next meeting. He said he would. Nelson mentioned that there is about four weeks before agriculture users turn on their pumps.

Dotson asked if there was any specifications. Monroe said there was not, it wasn't even a bill, just funding. Dotson asked if there is a way that ag users do not have to fill out an application. Monroe said the money was appropriated for the Cedar Valley Basin. He suggested the GMP Committee and CICWCD take a more active approach in setting the rules. Jones said ARDL often has the local advisory board who then recommends to Richard Sanberg and the decision is made in Salt Lake City. (12:48pm)

Spencer Jones left at 12:49pm

Monroe said he thinks the ARDL fund is a good place to hold the money. Dotson said it may be better and more convenient if the District handled the money. Monroe said he assumes most people participating in the program will apply for a loan with ARDL along with the grant.

Monroe will speak with Luann Adams at the water conference next week to work out some details. (12:50pm)

Nelson asked if anything has happened with the idea of the State Engineer buying back water rights instead of people using them. Monroe said he has not heard an update on that, but he thinks it is unlikely.

Melling said there are many cities that have water rights they'd stand to lose. Melling suggested it would probably take separate legislation for the State Engineer to do that. Monroe said he spoke with Nathan Moses who said Kent Jones would like to visit with the GMP Committee again in the spring. Dotson said he spoke with James Greer who said the same thing. (12:55pm)

Nelson asked where the SE stands on the Highway 56 boundary. Monroe said the SE would like to keep the current policies in place for Highway 56. They will also keep the current policy in place for changing dried up springs into groundwater. That means we will still have to protest those as they come up.

Hunter asked if the SE has a deadline for when the plan will be put into place. Monroe said there was not a timeline, but if this was something the current State Engineer wanted to accomplish in his tenure he has three years left. He is on the same timeline as the governor. Monroe thinks their timeline is greatly influenced by the GMP Committee.

Melling said Kent has to have local buyin to the plan. He has to be the administrator by statute, but he also has the right to adopt it. The GMP Committee can do what they want, but unless it is adopted, it has no legal bearing. Melling said in the past, his adoption has only been if the majority of the people in the area are willing to live with it. Monroe said he is looking at it from the legal side to see if there is buyin because it could be taken up in court. Bittmenn suggested getting the plan to him as

quickly as they can. There are a series of hearings the State Engineer needs to go through before anything can be adopted.

Melling said the SE office has a new Water Commissioner over Cedar Valley. She will be mapping all of the water rights through a GIS program which could be really helpful. (1:02pm).

Monroe suggested that the GMP Committee continue to review the document, so it is ready in a couple months to give to them. Nelson said they need more data for the agriculture people before they receive funding.

Cozzens asked if the pivot parts could be purchased in bulk to save further money. Dotson said that is what he was suggesting by having the District control the money. Hunter said he is most worried about the installation process and the amount of time it will take. (1:05). Monroe showed some images of pivots that have been converted. Discussion continues for several minutes.

Cozzens suggested the conversion of pivots could begin in the fall. The GMP Committee members agreed. (1:13pm)

Joe Melling closed the meeting
Meeting adjourned at 1:15 pm